

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BAGHDA 00565 01 OF 02 141111Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 OMB-01 EB-08 HUD-01 HA-05
/098 W

-----099575 141136Z /10

R 140713Z MAR 78
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5843
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BAGHDAD 0565

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINR, SHUM, IZ
SUBJECT: KRDISH AFFAIRS

REF: 77 BAGHDAD A-62 OF DECEMBER 31, 1977

1. SUMMARY: IRAQI GOVERNMENT IS TRYING TO SPUR
RECONSTRUCTION IN KURDISH AREAS AND ESTABLISH A LOYAL
POLITICAL DIALOGUE. ON MILITARY FRONT, IRAQI ARMY
HAS BEGUN SPRING MANEUVERS AIMED AT CHECKING SCATTERED
GUERRILLA ACTIVITY. MAIN THREAT PERCEIVED ALONG SYRIAN
AND TURKISH BORDERS. END SUMMARY.

2. ANNIVERSARY OF MARCH 11, 1970 MANIFESTO GRANTING
ADMINISTRATIVE AUTONOMY IN THE KURDISH AREAS AND THE
FORMAL ESTABLISHMENT FOUR YEARS LATER OF AUTONOMOUS
AREA LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE COUNCILS HAS BEEN OCCASION
FOR MEDIA PAEANS TO ARAB-KURDISH BROTHERHOOD AND
THE IRAQI REVOLUTION. CELEBRATION OF KURDISH NEW YEAR
(NAWROOZ) AS AN OFFICIAL HOLIDAY ON MARCH 15 ADDS A
CULTURAL DIMENSION.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BAGHDA 00565 01 OF 02 141111Z

3. SKEPTICS HAVE CAUSE TO WONDER HOW MUCH SUBSTANCE
UNDERLIES THE BALLYHOO, BUT MOST OBSERVERS HERE CREDIT
THE BAGHDAD REGIME WITH EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN THE KURDISH AREAS.
MINISTER OF HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION CONFIRMED EVIDENCE
OF MAJOR PUSH FOR RECONSTRUCTION AFTER YEARS

OF RELATIVE NEGLECT WHEN HE ANNOUNCED MARCH 2 THAT HOUSING, ROAD AND SERVICES PROJECTS WORTH \$590 MILLION WOULD BE BUILT THIS YEAR IN THE AUTONOMOUS AREA. MINISTRY OF INTERIOR HAS ALSO JUST ANNOUNCED MAJOR SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ALLOCATIONS TO GOVERNORATES AND MUNICIPALITIES OF SULAIMANIYA, ERBIL AND DOHUK. ANNOUNCEMENT APPEARED TIMED TO GIVE SUBSTANCE TO REGIME'S CLAIM THAT IT ENTRUSTING MORE RESPONSIBILITIES TO KURDISH LOCAL ADMINISTRATORS.

4. HOUSING IN KURDISH LOWLANDS WAS A MAJOR FEATURE OF DEVELOPMENTS NOTED IN REPAIR. PROVISION OF RENT-FREE HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT TO KURDS RELOCATED FROM BORDER AND OTHER SENSITIVE AREAS HAVE BEEN CENTRAL FEATURES OF THE PACIFICATION PROGRAM. LONG RANGE NATURE OF HOUSING POLICY IS INDICATED BY RCC RESOLUTION OF FEBRUARY 13 WHICH DECREED THAT HOUSES IN "MODEL VILLAGES" WOULD BECOME PROPERTY OF OCCUPANTS PROVIDED THEY RESIDED IN THEM CONTINUOUSLY FOR 10 YEARS. THIS VARIATION OF HOMESTEADING APPLIES TO 110 VILLAGES WITH 18,876 RESIDENTIAL UNITS, AND MORE ARE BEING BUILT.

5. GENUINE AUTONOMY IS QUITE ANOTHER MATTER. PROGRESS IN POLITICAL AND CULTURAL AREAS IS LAGGING BEHIND ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ADVANCES. REGIME HAS STILL NOT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BAGHDA 00565 01 OF 02 141111Z

FOUND FORMULA FOR ESTABLISHING A DEGREE OF KURDISH POLITICAL ACTIVITY WHICH WOULD SERVE TO RELIEVE FRUSTRATIONS AND TO MAKE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION MORE RESPONSIVE WHILE AT THE SAME TIME BEING "SAFE." RECENT APPOINTMENT OF A NEW MINISTER OF STATE FOR COORDINATION WITH THE AUTONOMOUS AREA IS HOPEFUL SIGN. KHALID ABID OTHMAN, WHILE A NOTCH BELOW HIS PREDECESSOR IN BAATH PARTY RANK, HAS A SOLID REPUTATION AS AN ADMINISTRATOR WITH LONG EXPERIENCE IN NORTHERN AFFAIRS. UNLIKE HIS PREDECESSOR, WHO SELDOM STRAYED FROM THE COMFORT AND SAFETY OF BAGHDAD, OTHMAN HAS STARTED HIS TENURE WITH VIGOROUS SCHEDULE OF TRAVEL WITHIN KURDISH AREA.

6. PAST MONTHS HAVE SEEN OTHER PERSONNEL MOVEMENTS WHICH SUGGEST CENTRAL GOVERNMENT IS TRYING TO PUMP VITALITY INTO LOCAL ADMINISTRATION. A NEW GOVERNOR OF ERBIL WAS APPOINTED IN JANUARY, AND PERSONNEL SHIFTS AT LOWER LEVELS WITHIN THE AUTONOMOUS AREA HAVE BEEN APPEARING IN OFFICIAL GAZETTE WITH UNUSUAL FREQUENCY.

7. IN FEBRUARY, TWO FORMER CLOSE ASSOCIATED OF MUSTAFA BARZANI ASSUMED OFFICIAL POSITIONS IN THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. PARA TAWFIG, WHO WAS A MEMBER OF THE KDP POLITICAL BUREAU IN 1970, IS NOW THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE STATE ENTERPRISE FOR RIVER TRANSPORT. HABIB MOHAMMED KARIM, SECRETARY OF THE KDP IN 1970 AND BARZANI'S CHOICE FOR "KURDISH VICE-PRESIDENT" OF THE GOI IN 1971, HAS BEEN NAMED INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE INCOME TAX DIRECTORATE GENERAL. THESE APPOINTMENTS TENDED TO CONFIRM VIEWS OF LOCAL OBSERVERS THAT REGIME IS SUCCESSFULLY ASSIMILATING MOST OF THE HIGH RANKING KURDISH POLITICIANS.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BAGHDA 00565 02 OF 02 141118Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 OMB-01 EB-08 HUD-01 HA-05
/098 W

-----099673 141135Z /11

R 140713Z MAR 78
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5844
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BAGHDAD 0565

8. PRO-REGIME KURDISH DEOMOCRATIC PARTY WAS PREDICTABLY ACTIVE ON MARCH 11 ANNIVERSARY. IT DECLARED, "THE ADVANCE OF SELF-RULE OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS IS RICH WITH POSITIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND GAINS." KDP STATEMENT ALSO LAUDED THE "LIQUIDATION OF BACKWARD PRODUCTION RELATIONSHIPS," UNDERSTOOD AS SUPPORT FOR NATIONALIZATION OF PROPERTIES BELONGING TO ABSENTEE KURDISH LANDLORDS AND THEIR REDISTRIBUTION TO KURDISH PEASANTS.

9. MORE SURPRISING THAN ENTHUSIASM OF KDP, WHOSE MEMBERS HOLD 5 SEATS IN THE IRAQI CABINET, WAS RE-EMERGENCE OF KURDISH REVOLUTIONARY PARTY. PRESIDENT BAKR RECEIVED DELEGATION OF KRP, WHICH HAS BEEN MORIBUND FOR PAST YEAR, AND PUBLICLY URGED

THEM TO CONTINUE REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY WITHIN
THE POPULAR AND PROGRESSIVE NATIONAL FRONT, UMBRELLA
FOR BAATH PARTY, COMMUNIST PARTY AND PRO-REGIME
KURDISH PARTIES. SO FAR, THERE IS NO OTHER EVIDENCE
THAT KRP WILL COMPETE SERIOUSLY WITH KDP FOR
GOVERNMENT POSITIONS, AND KDP REMAINS ONLY VIABLE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BAGHDA 00565 02 OF 02 141118Z

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION COMPETING WITH BAATH AND COMMUNISTS
FOR GRASSROOTS SUPPORT.

10. IN LESS CONTROVERSIAL CULTURAL AREA, REGIME MAY
BE WILLING TO UNDERWRITE A LARGER DEGREE OF CULTURAL
AND LINGUISTIC AUTONOMY. KURDISH ACADEMY OF
SCIENCES, ESTABLISHED IN 1974, IS GRADUALLY INCREASING ITS
RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION ACTIVITIES. MINISTER
OF INFORMATION RECENTLY TOURED THE NORTH WITH INDICATION
THAT THOUGHT IS BEING GIVEN TO EXPANSION OF KURDISH
LANGUAGE RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING. OFFICIAL
MEDIA STATE THAT 1,736 SCHOOLS WERE BUILT
IN THE AUTONOMOUS AREA FOLLOWING ITS ESTABLISHMENT
IN 1974.

11. GUERILLA ACTIVITY REMAINS AT A LOW LEVEL,
BUT IRAQI REGIME TAKES IT SERIOUSLY ENOUGH TO MAINTAIN
A MAJOR PART OF IRAQI ARMY IN THE NORTH. THERE ARE
REPORTS OF CLASHES INVOLVING IRAQI CASUALTIES, AND
RESERVISTS OF JUNIOR NONCOM LEVEL HAVE BEEN CALLED UP.

12. MAJOR ARMY MANEUVERS BEGAN IN EARLY FEBRUARY
WHEN WEATHER BEGAN TO PERMIT MOVEMENTS OFF PAVED
ROADS. THERE ARE NO RELIABLE ESTIMATES OF GUERILLA
NUMBERS, AND THEY ARE BELIEVED TO BE OPERATING IN
WIDELY SCATTERED SMALL GROUPS NEAR SYRIAN AND TURKISH
BORDERS. IRANIAN BORDER IS REPORTED QUIET WITH GOOD
COOPERATION BETWEEN IRAQI AND IRANIAN BORDER FORCES.
SYRIAN COUNSELOR ACKNOWLEDGES THAT JALAL TALABANI
IS IN DAMASCUS BUT STATES THAT HIS GOVERNMENT IS NOT
INVOLVED IN KURDISH DISSIDENCE IN ANY WAY.

13. COMMENT: IRAQI REGIME CONTINUES TO USE CARROT AND
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BAGHDA 00565 02 OF 02 141118Z

STICK APPROACH TO KURDISH AREAS. ECONOMIC
RECONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVED SOCIAL SERVICES ARE
GENUINE AND, HOWEVER INADEQUATE, MAY SLOWLY

BEGIN TO BUILD SUPPORT AMONG KURDISH MASSES. EFFORTS
TO DEVELOP A POLITICAL DIALOGUE WHICH IS BOTH
ACTIVE AND LOYAL APPEAR OVERLY CAUTIOUS. REGIME'S
INITIATIVES HAVE LACKED IMAGINATION, AND ADMINISTRATORS
IN KURDISH AREAS HAVE OFTEN BEEN LOW CALIBER OFFICIALS
WITH NO POLITICAL STANDING AMONG THEIR OWN PEOPLE.
IN MILITARY AND SECURITY SPHERES, OUTLOOK IS FOR
CONTINUED HIGH PROFILE FOR IRAQI ARMY AND VIGOROUS
EFFORTS TO PURSUE ARMED DISSIDENTS WHO REMAIN IN THE FIELD.
MACK

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL STABILITY, GOVERNMENT REFORM, KURDS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BAGHDA00565
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780112-1157
Format: TEL
From: BAGHDAD
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780373/aaaacjvp.tel
Line Count: 234
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 5cfcf5c7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3346893
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KRDISH AFFAIRS
TAGS: PINS, PINR, SHUM, IZ
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5cfcf5c7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014